

PLEASE NOTE: Legislative Information **cannot** perform research, provide legal advice, or interpret Maine law. For legal assistance, please contact a qualified attorney.

An Act To Provide More Information to the Public Advocate

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Sec. 1. 35-A MRSA §1713 is enacted to read:

§ 1713. Authority to request additional information

In addition to the authority granted under section 1708, the Public Advocate may request, in writing, that any utility subject to the jurisdiction of the commission respond to information requests regarding any issue that is within the jurisdiction of the commission, including any matter related to the rates, charges, tariffs, books or service quality of the utility, and the utility shall answer these information requests fully and completely in a reasonably prompt manner, not to exceed 30 calendar days from the date of the request. Commission rules pertaining to the scope of questions and objections to discovery apply to any request under this section, and the commission has jurisdiction to rule on any objections or motions to compel. If the utility fails to answer the information requests in a reasonably prompt manner, the Public Advocate may request enforcement of this section from the commission. This section does not limit the right of the Public Advocate to engage in discovery in the context of an adjudicatory proceeding at the commission.

SUMMARY

This bill authorizes the Public Advocate to make written information requests of utilities subject to the jurisdiction of the Public Utilities Commission on any matter related to the rates, charges, tariffs, books or service quality of the utility. The utility has a reasonable period of time, not to exceed 30 days, in which to respond to the inquiries. If the utility refuses to respond, the Public Advocate may request enforcement by the Public Utilities Commission.